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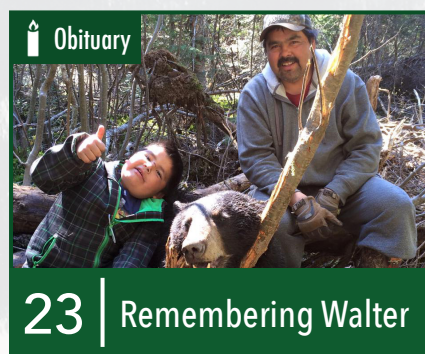
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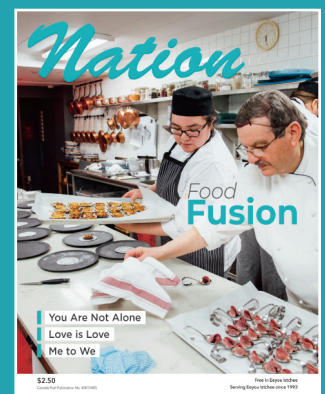


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Trish Chiasson



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Meet the **old boss**

by Lyle Stewart



A quarter-century ago, a group of wild-eyed young people were battling around the idea of founding a newsmagazine to cover the Cree communities of James Bay. They had no resources, no big investor, but they did have the will to work and the zeal to make their vision a reality.

Improbably, *the Nation* will celebrate its 25th anniversary later this year. Only a few of those founders remain involved in the magazine after all those years, many having gone on to other careers or to found other businesses. One, in particular, editor Will Nicholls, has been instrumental in keeping this unlikely adventure alive.

Since he convinced me to help out about 20 years ago, we've shared hundreds of late nights, beavering away at the computer, arguing about stories, discussing how they should be edited, celebrating victories, regretting opportunities that slipped away. Many of those nights may have involved a glass or several, but they always involved camaraderie.

If a small business is like a family, Will has certainly become a brother to me. We share everything, from professional challenges to personal problems. We've fought, hugged it out, and fought again, only to end up laughing.

We've grown up with this magazine, and have found ourselves in middle age, with the added wisdom that comes with time and experience but also with another set of worries and insecurities. The magazine's character has changed along with us. Sometimes thoughts of how to ensure the survival of this young adult called the Nation creep in.

These thoughts were triggered as I visited Will in the hospital several times last week (including for a midnight McDonald's run to supplement his bland hospital diet) after he suffered a broken ankle. The wounds take longer to heal now, as I have also discovered with a hockey injury that is still painful weeks after it occurred. We're no longer the young men who find it easy

to bounce back from the collisions we encounter in life.

But I am heartened by the young talent and energy that has come along to help us continue churning out issue after issue. Some recent additions weren't even born when the Nation began publishing. But their new ideas and approaches have contributed to keeping the magazine fresh and relevant. This reassures me that Will Nicholls' baby will continue living and thriving long after we have turned our last page.

Until then, however, we have many more issues to publish, battles to fight and glasses to drain. The rookies will keep us on our toes even as we try to teach them an old trick or two.

And to you, my brother, I raise my glass. You may not be as light on your feet for a little while, but with a little help we will still meet a few more deadlines.



Two-Spirited Community Support Conference encourages inclusion and acceptance

by Dan Isaac

It's about time that conversations about same-sex relationships came out of the closet in Eeyou Istchee, says Mathias "Maloose" Jolly.

Jolly was the organizer of Eeyou Istchee's Two-Spirited Community Support Conference, which took place February 16-17 at Montreal's Le Nouvel Hotel. And while it was the conference's seventh annual gathering, it was the first time the press was allowed to participate.

"There isn't much awareness around two-spiritedness and two-spirited issues in Eeyou Istchee," Jolly told *the Nation*. "So I felt it was time to go public because it's okay to be gay, it's okay to talk about it, it's not something that should be hidden."

In addition to the lack of dialogue around the subject, two-spirited people growing up in Eeyou Istchee face a plethora of challenges and it starts early on, according to Jolly. Visibly different children tend to be bullied verbally and physically.

More difficulties arise when two-spirited people reach their teenage years, Jolly observed.

"That's when our emotions can get mixed up so bad to the point we don't even know how we're feeling anymore. That's the time every teen should be accepted and loved for who they are. Unfortunately, a lot of two-spirited youth don't get that growing up."

A 2011 study by the American Academy of Paediatrics said that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, queer and two-spirited (LGBTQ2S) youth are four times more likely to commit sui-

cide compared to their heterosexual peers. That rate is compounded when LGBTQ2S youth find themselves in un-supportive environments.

But issues around being two-spirited in Eeyou Istchee follow most into their adult life. "Statistically, 10% of Eeyou Istchee is two-spirited," Jolly noted. "But as we reach our 20s, when most people come out, only a very small percentage of people in Eeyou Istchee who are two-spirited feel secure enough to do so."

This year also marked the first time the Cree leadership participated in the Two-Spirited Community Support Conference. In his comments to the gathering, Grand Chief Abel Bosum thanked the participants and applauded their courage while sharing a message of inclusivity.

"I see this gathering as a sign of very positive changes that are happening in our Nation with respect to attitudes toward people of different gender and sexual identities," said Bosum. "It is embedded in our traditional values, that we are respectful of all peoples. On behalf of the Grand Council and of the Cree Nation Government, allow me to say that we stand up against all forms of discrimination, including discrimination against two-spirited people. Our Nation needs each and every individual. And we need each person to feel safe, free of judgment, and included."

When asked about what it felt like to have the support of Grand Chief Bosum, Jolly was reminded of his youth.

"It was something I needed to hear when I was five, 10 years old," Jolly

noted. "I needed support from my leader at that age because I didn't have anyone to defend me as a two-spirited person."

Through this period of Jolly's life and into his teens, he remembers feeling confused, even suicidal. "I didn't understand myself, I didn't understand my place in society," said Jolly. "I felt like I wanted to die."

The first step towards making things better for two-spirited people in Eeyou Istchee is talking about it openly, the next is education, he emphasized. "We need to train our social workers, mental health workers, nurses, teachers, and everyone working in the public system in Eeyou Istchee on how to help the two-spirited community."

But beyond the outside world, the most important thing to focus on is the family-unit.

"It has always been a struggle for parents to understand their two-spirited child. The vast majority of them are in denial. Some parents have disowned or neglected their children after they've come out," acknowledged Jolly.

"Some have said to their child, 'It's okay you're two-spirited, just don't do it around me or in public.' This is wrong. You have to embrace your child just the way they are. Otherwise they'll feel abandoned."

And in the end, it all comes down to love and acceptance. "The one thing that every child needs, the one thing that will save them from suicide and self harm is unconditional love from a parent," said Jolly.

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Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency / Agence canadienne d'évaluation environnementale

Akasaba West Copper-Gold Mine Project Public Comments Invited

February 21, 2018 — The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (the Agency) is conducting a federal environmental assessment for the proposed Akasaba West Copper-Gold Mine Project, located in Quebec.

The Agency invites the public and Indigenous groups to comment on the draft Environmental Assessment Report, a document that includes the Agency's conclusions and recommendations regarding the potential environmental effects of the project, the proposed mitigation measures, the significance of adverse environmental effects, and the follow-up program.

The Agency also invites the public and Indigenous groups to comment on the potential environmental assessment conditions for the project. Final conditions would become legally binding on the proponent if the project is allowed to proceed.

All comments received will be considered public. Written comments in either official language must be submitted **by March 23, 2018** to:

Akasaba West Copper-Gold Mine Project
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
901-1550 d'Estimaerville Avenue
Quebec, Quebec G1J 0C1
Telephone: 418-649-6444
Email: Akasaba@ceaa-acee.gc.ca

To view the draft Environmental Assessment Report and potential conditions, visit the Agency's website at canada.ca/ceaa (Registry reference number 80090). Printed copies are available at the following locations:

Council of the Anicinapek of Kitcisakik
100-615 avenue Centrale
Val-d'Or, Quebec

Val-d'Or Library
600, 7e rue
Val-d'Or, Quebec

Council of the Nation Anishnabe of Lac Simon
1026 boulevard Cicip
Lac Simon, Quebec

For more information on the Agency's privacy policies, consult the Privacy Notice on its website at canada.ca/ceaa.

The Proposed Project

Agnico Eagle Mines Limited is proposing the construction, operation, and decommissioning of an open-pit copper and gold mine with an ore production capacity of approximately 3,000 to 4,000 tonnes per day for four to six years. The proposed project is located approximately 15 kilometres east of Val-d'Or, Quebec. The ore will be processed by the Goldex mine concentrator, which is also located near Val-d'Or. Tailings from the proposed project will be used to restore the Manitou mine site, an old tailings facility of high environmental concern.

Canada

Price hikes ahead

Télébec monthly rates will increase by \$2.50 for phone accounts and \$4 a month for internet, the company announced March 1. Currently priced at \$70/month for internet and an additional \$35/month for phone lines, Télébec also charges network fees of close to \$9 in Wemindji and long distance bundles starting at \$15.

However, Eeyou Communications Network's fibre plans to launch this spring at "extremely competitive" prices, according to ECN President Alfred Loon.

ECN and partner Distributel expect to announce prices for all services and packages in the next few weeks. "Unlimited for us means no usage fees and no hidden charges, just ultra-high-speed with unmatched quality," said Loon.



Cheechoo hangs up skates

Former NHLer Jonathan Cheechoo announced March 6 that he's leaving the game of hockey.

The Cree right winger from Moose Factory made a name for himself playing alongside Joe Thornton in San Jose during the NHL's 2005-06 season when he anchored his name in hockey history by scoring 56 goals and winning the Maurice "Rocket" Richard Trophy.

The 37-year-old ends his career after playing 501 NHL games, scoring 170 goals and 305 points, and tacking on 167 points in 226 games playing in the rival Kontinental Hockey League (KHL).

"I have been privileged to be able to reach my goals and to play the game that I love," said Cheechoo in a statement. "Hockey has taken me from Moose Factory to San Jose and many places around the world."

No appeal in Boushie case

Saskatchewan crown prosecutors say they won't appeal the not-guilty verdict in the Colten Boushie murder trial.

In a March 7 press conference, Assistant Deputy Attorney General Anthony Gerein said, "I know there is much sadness over the decision not to appeal. That is unfortunate, but there can be no appeal because the law does not allow it."

The announcement comes the day after the Civilian Review and

Complaints Commission for the RCMP initiated a complaint and a public interest investigation into the RCMP's investigation of the death of Boushie.

"My honestly held belief is that the RCMP in Saskatchewan either does not know how to properly conduct a murder investigation – or that, in this case, they made the decision not to dedicate sufficient resources to it," Boushie family's lawyer Chris Murphy told the CBC.

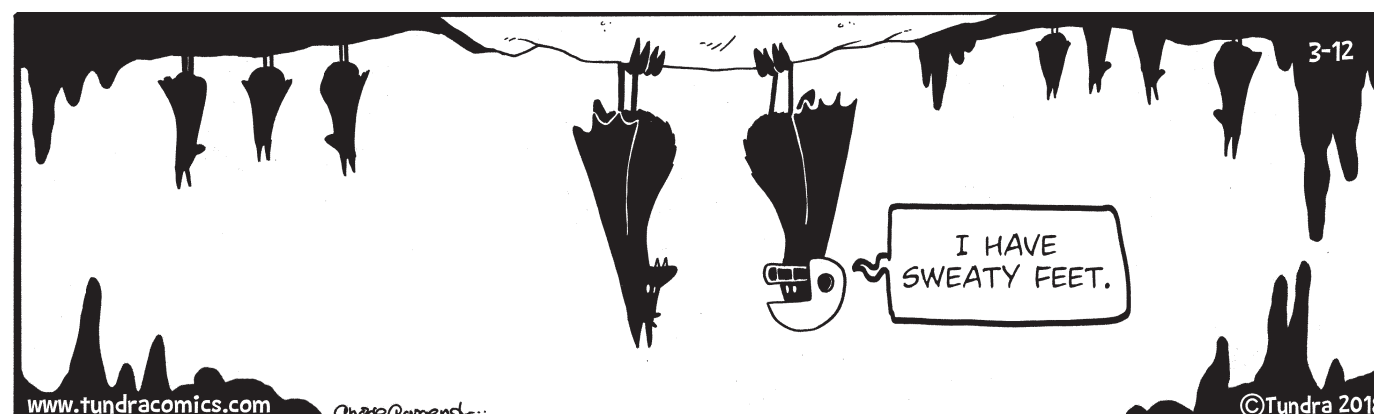


If you are an Indigenous woman of Eeyou Istchee and you feel that you or anyone you know is in danger, we are here to help you!

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it takes a nation

Cree Health Board and Mikw Chiyâm arts program team up on **suicide prevention campaign**

by Amy German | Artwork provided by the Mikw Chiyâm Art Program

It takes a village to raise a child, according to the old adage, but a recent project saw an entire nation come together to promote hope, community and life with five spectacular posters for an anti-suicide campaign.

The campaign is the brainchild of Pauline Bobbish of the Cree Health Board Mental Health Department which created the regional suicide-prevention committee, called Maanuuhikuu. She gathered Cree from all nine communities, including Elders, members of the Cree School Board, Eeyou Eenou Police Force, the CWEIA and Cree youth.

“We had been talking about doing an awareness campaign in Eeyou

*“We didn’t want to delve into that realm of trauma without being **trained professionals** in that domain”*

- Katie Green, Program Director for Mikwchiyam

Istchee,” explained Bobbish. “My coordinator, Julianne Matoush, and I had been talking about how we were going to approach it because we didn’t want to ‘fight suicide’ – we wanted to approach it in a respectful way.”

Eventually, several individuals emerged from the group who interacted well with students on these issues, including William Saganash, who works in crime prevention regionally for the

Eeyou Eenou Police Force, and screen printer Chris Robinson, the artist in residency in Chisasibi – where this project was launched.

Cree School Board high school students in the Mikw Chiyâm arts program provided the artwork for these pieces.

Mikw Chiyâm Program Director Katie Green said students were initially hesitant to participate, but once they

signed on, they became more enthusiastic about the project.

“What we found was that a lot of mental health talk comes out with the

Green observed. “I wanted to design preventative programs so that youth could find strength and community for support.”

their peers. “But then there was a lot of trauma with the teacher and the artist and so it became a question of how do we navigate these questions,” she noted.

Two of the posters came out of the original pilot project in Chisasibi, while the other three were produced in Mistissini when the project was carried out there.

“What was really beautiful was the crossing over of so many different entities with this project. Having Cree Justice, the Cree School Board and the CBHSSJB all involved while also crossing intergenerationally really showed how the prevention of suicide needed to be addressed on such a holistic level.

*“I wanted to design **preventative programs** so that youth could find strength and community for support”*

- Katie Green

students and we didn’t want to delve into that realm of trauma without being trained professionals in that domain,”

What interested Green was that many students felt safe to delve into these subjects because they were with

“We had been talking about doing an awareness campaign in Eeyou Istchee, [and] about how we were going to approach it because we didn’t want to ‘fight suicide’ – we wanted to approach it in a respectful way.”

- Pauline Bobbish, Cree Health Board Maanuuhikuu Mental Health Department



Homage to Cree cuisine brings Sabtuan cooking class to high-end Montreal restaurant

Traditional twist

by Joshua Grant
Photos by Trish Chiasson

Traditional Cree cooking met Portuguese haute cuisine February 26-27 when the Sabtuan Regional Training and Vocational Centre's (SRVTC) professional cooking class teamed up with renowned chef Helena Loureiro at her Montreal restaurant Portus 360.

Over the course of two nights, eight Cree students helped prepare a six-course menu that fused mousselines and consommés with pike and hare and incorporated bannock, Shelby dumplings, Labrador tea, wilted spinach, deer tenderloin and other Cree delicacies. Dessert was a mousse made of Saskatoon berries, topped with haskap jam and birch syrup caramel.

Located atop the former Delta Hotel (777 Robert Bourassa Blvd), Portus 360 is a revolving restaurant that provides its clientele with a panoramic view of Montreal's downtown and Old Port – from Mount Royal to the iconic Farine Five Roses sign.

For aspiring chefs from Eeyou Istchee, Portus 360 provided a glimpse of what it's like to work in a high-pressure, professional

cooking environment. The experience, part of the annual Montréal en Lumière festival, opened their eyes to opportunities available once they complete their program.

"It's really interesting, it's a good ambience," said Mistissini's Carole Ann Mapachee after wrapping up an afternoon of food

"They saw how a real kitchen works, with a professional chef and her team, having to be on top of everything – they really appreciated that exchange of knowledge"

- Sabtuan's cooking instructor Jocelyn Myre

preparation and an evening of service in the Portus kitchen. "It's my second time in a big kitchen, I used to work in the Mistissini Lodge, but this is more high-class. We're gaining knowledge about how to handle the kitchen, how to decorate plates – everything has to be precise."

Oujé-Bougoumou's Israel Bosum also had a great experience. "I've worked in other restaurants before, but this was different," he observed. "It was tough but it was fun."



*“We’re gaining knowledge about how to handle the kitchen, how to decorate plates – **everything has to be precise**”*

– Carole Ann Mapachee

Mapachee and Bosum were in the first round of students to share the Portus 360 kitchen with Loureiro and her staff. The rest of the class relaxed and enjoyed the meal their classmates helped prepare before donning their chef uniforms the following day.

“We were pretty busy and the time went by fast,” related Iris Awashish from Mistissini. “I learned a lot while I was there, how to actually work in a real kitchen, as opposed to the school kitchen, and handling the busy supper rush.”

“It taught me that you have to work really hard, for really long hours to be successful in a kitchen,” said Robert Martin of Waswanipi. “But it was awesome. I think other people should take this program.”

Sabtuan’s cooking instructor Jocelyn Myre says the idea of Loureiro’s “Homage to Cree Cuisine” and his students’ involvement originated from another famous chef, Jean-Paul Grappe. Grappe taught at the Institut de tourisme et d’hôtellerie du Québec for over 30 years and authored several cooking books.

Myre and Grappe have known each other for some time, but for the past six years they have been working together in the James Bay region, preparing suppers in Chibougamau and banquets in Waswanipi, often with the help of Myre’s students. It was Grappe who proposed a collaboration between Loureiro and the Sabtuan cooking class, and Loureiro jumped on board right away.

“[The idea] all came from Jean-Paul Grappe,” said Myre. “He had the idea of bringing me and the students down to Montreal to work with Helena Loureiro. He pitched it to her and she agreed. Then she came up north to see how we do our thing, talk about the possible menu and look at

It was Grappe who proposed a collaboration between Loureiro and the Sabtuan cooking class, and Loureiro jumped on board right away.

how we could incorporate Cree cooking into her style.”

Before a planning session with Myre and the cooking class at the SRVTC, Loureiro and Grappe first spent some time at the Neeposh camp in Waswanipi where they tasted Shelby dumplings, shared goose meat cooked over an open fire and learned about traditional Cree cooking first-hand.

Loureiro noted the parallels between Portuguese and Cree cuisine – cultures made up of fishers and hunters who nourish themselves from both the land and the sea. Her goal was to share Cree culture and gastronomy with a hint of Portugal, and help the Sabtuan cooking class develop their palates, techniques and knowledge of cooking in the process.

“The students really appreciated it,” Myre said. “They saw how a real kitchen works, with a professional chef and her team, and having to be on top of everything – they welcomed that exchange of knowledge.”



*“It taught me that you have to work really hard, for **really long hours** to be successful in a kitchen*

– Robert Martin

WE Day 2018

Told through the eyes of a Native kid who got lucky with his entrepreneurship class

by Trey Turner

On February 20, I and five other Mistissini high students embarked on a school trip to Montreal to attend the charity event known as WE Day.

The event was a joy to experience and I have to thank the Cree Nation Youth Council and the Cree School Board for funding the trip. Without you, we wouldn't have been able to order Domino's in the middle of the night.

Melissa, our head chaperone, planned for our bus to arrive at the school at 6 am. Being the responsible human being I am, I filled a backpack of stuff the prior night (who needs clothes?). Once everyone got on the bus, it became apparent that we were missing two out of six students. Those students later jumped on the bus in Perch, in what could be called a fatal error due to Indian Time not being included in the planning process.

Thus began the 10-hour bus ride to Montreal. I like to call it "le pèlerinage français" because one of the things I like to do during road trips is count and

I only experienced about 99.9% of the six-hour event, due to passing out for 10 seconds before being kicked back awake by the kid behind me (thanks, Derek)

admire churches. The ride there was decent, slept a couple of hours, saw some large churches and ate some food. We arrived in Montreal at about 4:30 pm. This left us an afternoon to do whatever downtown Montreal had



Photos by Stephanie Briere

to offer. We ate at a food court after taking about an hour to choose what to eat. We met up with some long-time-no-see-friends. I searched for a store selling video games until someone told me that it was closing time. Distraught, I followed the group to the cinema to watch The Maze Runner 3.

After the movie, we returned to the hotel and were sent to sleep in our rooms, which we did not do. Instead, we put on facemasks, ate junk food and ordered pizza and wings. The chaperones were not very happy with us, as they had planned for us to be ready at 6 am for WE Day. We ingested our Domino's pizza quietly and discreetly, because what's a trip to the city without ordering food to your hotel late at night?

I had a pullout couch all to myself,

seemed like hundreds of other classes had intended to do the same, as the line of school buses on narrow St. Denis St. seemed neverending. After splitting the sea of prepubescent students and finding suitable landing pads, we sat down for WE Day.

And holy cow was it great. Granted, I only experienced about 99.9% of the six-hour event, due to passing out for 10 seconds before being kicked back awake by the kid behind me (thanks, Derek). But that 5 hours, 59 minutes and 50 seconds were filled to the brim with t-shirt giveaways, motivational speakers bringing us down and back up, t-shirt giveaways, examples of youth who caused profound positive change in their community, t-shirt giveaways and more!

There were DJs, 14-year-olds, Olympians, football players, CEOs, founders, co-founders, activists, 12-year-olds and everyone you could ever learn about in a youth entrepreneurship class. A few notable speakers included Spencer West, a mountain climber who lost both his legs at the age five; Karl Wolf, a multi-platinum singer-songwriter who performed at the event; Daniel Patchell-Evans, founder and CEO of GoodLife Fitness; and WE Day founder Craig Kielburger.

But if you asked me who my favourite speaker/performance was, I'd say Theland Kicknosway. Theland is 15, is Wolf Clan, is Potawatomi and Cree, and is a member of Walpole Island in southern Ontario. He is best known for drumming Justin Trudeau into Rideau Hall in 2015 to be sworn in as prime minister and winning the Unity Youth Award in 2016. A singer, a drummer and a grass-&-hoop dancer, Theland spoke about the tragic Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) crisis that terrorizes

It seemed like hundreds of other classes had intended to do the same, as the line of school buses on wee little St Denis Street didn't seem to end

Native people in Canada and performed his traditional hoop dance live. His dance was incredible to watch and even more incredible to know that non-Native kids and teachers were experiencing this performance alongside us.

As WE Day came to a close we scurried out of the theatre, wading through students and staff. The students watched in jealousy as our Greyhound bus pulled up to pick us up and immediately head home to Mistissini.

WE Day was great. I'm sad that we weren't able to spend more time in Montreal (so I could buy a video game), but I think the opportunity and experience of being in the city was good enough. I want to close off with an apology to our Domino's delivery guy. Sorry for being inexperienced in the social expectation of "tips" and only giving you a toonie. The food you brought was delicious, and thank you for your service.



Cree youth inspired at WE Day Montreal on identity

by Nick Wapachee

Harland Kitchen was among 13 Cree youth at the WE Day Montreal event on Feb. 21 at the Théâtre Saint-Denis.

The 17-year-old said he heard inspiring stories from speakers who were young and old, but one person who stood out for him at the event was Lisa Charleyboy.

Charleyboy is an Indigenous woman, who spoke about embracing her heritage and being proud of one's identity.

Kitchen said he knows that he's different from the rest of Canada, but he wants to preserve the Cree language, culture and values.

"We need the Cree language and Cree culture to empower the next generation, to be ambassadors for our nation and inspire the youth to preserve the language and culture."

Kitchen said it's challenging for him to get resources for Cree language due to the lack of Cree teachers. "I have four months left of school," he said, "and I still haven't done most of the work."

He said the solution is to hire more Cree teachers and have engaging resources for the students. "Our language and culture are really important because that's who we are."

Kitchen pointed out a difference between the two high schools he's attended. Where he learned his Cree up to Secondary 5 was in Waswanipi's Willie J. Happyjack Memorial School.

"But here, we are only given English and French," he said about Mistissini's Voyageur Memorial High School. "It's

hard to preserve our language because we're getting it in the community and not in the school."

Mistissini Youth Chief Samantha Awashish said it's the first time she attended an event like WE Day Montreal with her youth.

Awashish learned that Cree people should prioritize the Cree language in Eeyou Istchee. "We should talk to our kids in Cree," she said. "That's the most basic thing that we can do."

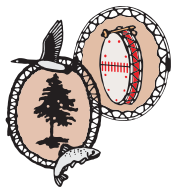
She said young children will learn Cree while they're in daycare and learn some English words. "But it shouldn't stop there. Once they're finished daycare, we should continue to speak to them in Cree."

Awashish hopes that parents continue to speak to their children in Cree and create interactive videos where people can learn the language.

"Practice it, whenever you can," she said. "We should always remember to go back to our roots, go to the bush, learn Cree history from an Elder, it will help you identify yourself as a Cree person."

She said she will continue to work with the youth by coordinating events, conferences and conducting games about Cree language.

Awashish said that the next step is have key people to find solutions about Cree language for the upcoming Michiminihtau Chitayimuwininuu: Eeyou Istchee Language Engagement Session in Oujé-Bougoumou March 13-14.



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Walter George Bosum

July 31, 1968 - February 11, 2018

by Joshua Loon



If you ever saw a group of people standing in a circle and Walter was in it, you would have heard them laughing.

If you ever drove by his house, most likely, you would see a pair of legs sticking out from under his truck. They were Walter's.

If you were ever out with Walter and something wasn't working – like a skidoo that broke down, or a car that couldn't handle a winter morning – you didn't need to worry. He would just say, "If a guy invented this thing, another guy can fix it." And then he'd sit down and do just that.

If you had a problem, Walter had a solution. He could handle broken machine the way you handle a piece of toast when you spread butter on it. He loved fixing things – almost more than having them fixed and running properly.

If you were out hunting with Walter and a group of youth and you saw a moose or a bear, Walter would say, "Hey! Put your gun down. Let the young guys practice." He was a great, great hunter. One of our best. He had expertise and had mastered our traditional ways.

“He made you feel and know that **you had a purpose**”

But hunting for him was not about the kill. It was about making sure the next generation knew what he knew. About keeping the traditions alive and in our blood.

If you look at something in our community that works really well, and you wonder, "Hey, how did that ever get going?" – chances are that Walter was somehow involved. He was the kind of guy who worked behind the scenes, who made things work. And when time came for credit, he didn't want it. The spotlight was not something that interested him at all. What he wanted was our community to work well, our traditions to be honoured and maintained, and our youth to care and to know that they really really matter.

If you ever saw Walter talk about stuff he did, he would always tell you that he could never be the person he was without the support of his family. His wife, Louise,

whom he loved deeply, his parents who are valued Elders in the community, his four wonderful children and his grandchild for whom he lived and to whom he passed our knowledge. He was an awesome husband and father, an even more awesome grandfather, a brother to many, and a friend to even more. We are going to miss Walter for a long time. We will feel his absence – especially at Goose Break.

There's a lot in our communities that we have because of people like Walter – people who focus always on the good of the community, on the next generation – and who do things not just for themselves but for others. If you think of your community now, you probably know someone still alive today who reminds you of our brother Walter. Learn from them. Value them. Appreciate how much they have made happen for us. Because when

we lose someone like Walter, a person who has mastered our traditional way of life, we lose a piece of us, and of our identity.

Family, friends, Elders, community members, visitors, Walter was a mentor and a father figure. He left a legacy to keep family together. His legacy of hope lives in his children and wife and all the people he came across, a legacy to practice our way of life, a legacy that will last for generations to come. He was a friend who loved people and he exemplified what Jesus did to love. Walter had compassion for those who were struggling, to show them that there is hope. Even though times were tough, he made you feel and know that you had a purpose. We will greatly miss his physical presence, but we will continue to live life as he showed us to live.

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What's in a **name**

by Sonny Orr

A long time ago, when I was a cute, cherubic child, I had a long name to remember. There was my first name, middle name, second last name and finally my last name to remember and to tell everyone who asked me who I was. But, life being what it is, another name that compressed everything became my unofficial moniker. Yes, Sonny, as I am still known today. It's funny though, that only the Elders seemed to know my real name and would call me that throughout their lives.

After many years, I had to use my official name to open a bank account and to register for school, driver's license and other bureaucratic functions. After awhile, Indian Affairs decided that my name would include only my original name, which was Snowboy, just to comply with their strict interpretations of who could qualify as an Indian.

For many years, I was the only one in my family who had that name, simply due to the fact that I was born before my parents married. Incidentally, they married when I was two years old. I never really thought about that until years later as an adult when I wondered, "Hey, what am I doing in my parents' wedding pictures?"

Fortunately for me, in my tender young years as a child, no one really pressured me into knowing that I was bastardized for being alive. I went on my merry way happily content with my nickname. After several decades, I assumed that my nickname was my official name, just because that's what everyone called me.

In fact, in my adult years, I met many people who I still know only by their nicknames. I later learned that their nicknames were never mentioned directly to them. I made a few mistakes by calling them by their nicknames, raising their ire a notch or two, until I asked them what their real name was. I was completely surprised to learn that they had quite ordinary names. Their applied names were much more colourful and slightly skewed in terms of the actual meaning. I guess, that nearly everyone had a nickname said only behind their back.

My own multitude of names became further confused when the Cree Naskapi Act came around and renamed everyone in my family to match the Snowboy name in order to qualify as a member of the Cree tribe of northern Quebec. This not only applied to my immediate family, but to my uncles and their children too.

My aunts, who were married, kept their married name and didn't change at all. It all went back to the early days when my grandfather, at the time of census counting of Indians, was asked if he would keep his mother's name or his father's name. He proudly proclaimed his paternal heritage and kept the Herodier name.

Then to further confuse things, as I went through a legal marital struggle and the lawyer was trying to get my birth certificate for the courts, and it took two years before she could find my real name, which was Herodier. So, for me, I had another name to add to my already long list, which got pretty close to the Facebook record for longest name.

This not only made my own identity harder to keep track of, but today, it has been shortened again by Indian Affairs to just two names. This also affected other people, who often thought of me as two separate individuals, which is another story entirely. For a while, I had two Social Insurance Numbers and two health cards, each bearing different names. But for all of you readers out there, you can call me Sonny. It's so much more easier for the mind to remember and for the tongue to pronounce.



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Happy St. Patrick's Day

by Xavier Kataquapit



Happy St. Patrick's to those of Irish descent, or, as my friend Mike likes to say, "wishes they were." Aboriginal people across Canada have mixed with the Irish from the time they made it over the Atlantic Ocean. What was the attraction? Well, for one thing, after some history and getting to know one another both cultures realized they were oppressed.

It takes one to know one would be a good way to describe the bonding of the Irish and my people. Historically my people and the Irish were close to the land and the English considered those from Ireland as pagans because they worshipped the spirits of animals and the land. They saw us in the same way. My ancestors also shared the tradition of drumming and singing with the Irish. The drum is an important part of the Irish culture and a big part of musical performances. We have always used the drum.

Irish legends include the little people and Aboriginals also had a belief in and talked about experiences with these tiny ones. Because of their closeness to the land and nature, the Irish incorporated many herbs and ceremonies into their culture. They believed there were spirits in the land, lakes, rivers and trees. The English saw this belief system as a threat and considered the Irish as heathens and lesser beings as they did with Aboriginal peoples around the world. The English forced religion onto the Irish and of course we First Nation peoples were pushed into accepting Christian religions. We as Native people were forbidden from following our ancient traditions and culture as were the Irish.

The Irish once freely roamed their lands but they were forced by the English to give up this way of life. A campaign of oppression starved thousands during the Great Famine (1845-

49). Similarly, Native peoples across Canada were forced to stop their nomadic way of living that followed ancient traditional movements on the land to survive with hunting and gathering. We ended up on small reservation plots of land where we had little access to food sources. Our children were taken and put into residential school system to brainwash the "Indian" out of them. We were left out of the loop for centuries when it came to sharing any of the wealth generated by business development on our lands. That is basically how the Irish were treated by the English a few centuries ago too.

The French people who came to Canada were also in conflict with the English, and it was natural that they mixed with the Irish and my people. That is why today when you listen to the music of the James Bay coast you will hear Irish and French jigs with the fiddle, hand drum and guitar. This mix of the cultures has resulted in many Aboriginal people today having some ancestry that is either French or Irish.

On the James Bay coast I am very familiar with many Native families that have mixed with the Irish and the French and it is obvious in their names. The same is true in many First Nation communities right across the country. Over the centuries Aboriginal people in Canada have also mixed with the Scottish, English and Germans but they bonded more freely with the Irish and the French. Musically, I was always reminded of this connection when my uncles Gabe and Leo played the fiddle and their tunes definitely had an Irish and French origin. At local community events often I would hear the fiddle play as community members stepped frantically and with joy.

In towns and cities all across northern Ontario there are large populations with Irish heritage. I always find

it easy to mix with these folk. Here in Kirkland Lake there is a large contingent with Irish roots and a few years ago I befriended the wonderful Irishman Phil Heneberry. He was a colourful character, full of life, quick and intelligent with an interesting story and joke to make me and my Irish friend Mike laugh. This winter Phil passed on and I was saddened to hear this news because he always greeted me with a broad smile, twinkling mischievous eyes and kind words. I know many in the Kirkland Lake area are going to miss his magic and I am so sorry for his wife Gladys and son Myles. So, on this St. Patrick's Day I will pause for a minute to remember Phil and all those wild, amazing, talented, kind and mystical Irish people I have known and continue to meet. Éirinn go Brách.



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The Eenou-Eeyou Community Foundation (EECF) is a new fundraising organization established to support the community and social development goals of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee. Similarly, to community foundations in the south, the Eenou-Eeyou Community Foundation will raise funds from private and public donors and will channel this philanthropic support to Cree community needs. The Foundation is about to launch a multi-million-dollar fundraising campaign to fund the next phase of its growth.

POSITION OVERVIEW

The Eenou-Eeyou Community Foundation is currently searching for an Assistant Director of Development to further its fundraising activities. The position would allow you to work on developing relationships with donors, managing volunteers, and assisting in the management of the EECF's new fundraising campaign. The Assistant Director of Development will be an ambassador and educator of the foundation's mission, carrying the vision and message of the EECF within the Cree Nation, Quebec and Canada.

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